

54. The Power of Intention Setting

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SPEAKERS

Vanessa

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Welcome to coaching for Latina leaders, the only podcast dedicated to the advancement of Latinas at every level of life with your host Dr. Vanessa Calderon, a Latina with over 20 years of leadership experience, Harvard grad physician and mother of two.

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Hello Mujeres welcome back to the podcast. Today I am introducing you to the concept of intentionality. Now this is an incredibly powerful concept and before I go into it, I want to remind all of you of the awesome free guide that I created for you. The the ultimate five step guide to stop people pleasing now you can access it right now at VanessaCalderonMD.com/guide, Now the reason why I created that is because I have been working with hundreds of high achieving women. And the one thing that I consistently see that gets in the way of these women being ultimately really happy or at peace, or not being overwhelmed and not being stressed, is their need to please other people or their difficulty in setting boundaries, or how guilty they feel if they're afraid they're going to disappoint someone. So what I did was, I created an entire guide to help you walk through why we develop those people pleasing tendencies. I give you seven different steps to know whether or not you're actually people pleasing. And then I actually walk you through five steps that you can take right now to stop people pleasing today. So I want you to go out and get that because I created it just for you. And I know it'll be helpful. It's helped so many of my students already [VanessaCalderonMD/guide](http://VanessaCalderonMD.com/guide).

Okay, my friends, let's talk about intentionality. Now intentionality has been something that's been used for centuries outside of the United States. And in western medicine, we started to study it in the late 70s, early 80s. And research has shown that intentionality Prime's our brain and tells our brain to do what we're asking it to do. So I'm going to walk you through a few research studies, and then I'm going to show you how you can use it and when you can use intentionality. And then we'll summarize, okay. So research has shown that when you tell somebody to do something with intention ahead of time, it Prime's, your brain to do what you're telling it to do. So there was one study that was done with learning a second language. And what the researchers did is they went into this class where the students were trying to learn French, now that all of the students had the same basic knowledge of French. And they were they had the same teacher, and they broke them up into two different cohorts. With one cohort, they were, they were telling the students to learn with traditional with traditional ways to learn, watch the video, do a workshop, listen to the cassette tapes. And the second group of students, they were doing the same exact work, but they had one intervention. And the intervention was this, the teacher said,

when you're listening to the tapes of the people speaking French, I want you to listen for these specific words. And I want you to listen to see when you hear XYZ.

So the intervention was they were asking them to listen with intention. And what they saw at six weeks is that the students that were listening with intention, everything else being exactly the same, ended up doing better and they're on their end of the year exams, but also were able to better retain the language. Now there's a second study that is very similar and instead of listening with intention, it was watching with intention. So this second study was trying to see whether or not watching with intention was going to improve performance. So they took these dancers a group of ballet dancers, and they had them watch the video, same exact video, one group just watched the video and then tried to do the dance. And the second group watched the video. And while they were watching, the instructor said, Now when you watch this video, I want you to see where you think you're gonna stumble, what steps you think are going to be difficult and start thinking how you're going to overcome that. And that second group, when they did the dance, guess what they actually ended up doing better, they were better able to remember the sequence of steps and better able to perform. So intentionality can be used when you're learning something new. It can be used when you're performing something, but it can also be used in relationships.

Now, the reason why is this we have something in our brains called mirror neurons. Mirror neurons is how empathy works. So people can pick up on what you say and how you feel because they have mirror neurons inside of them that light up depending on what you're doing. So let me give you an example. Let's say you are a boss of a group. And you have to go to the group of the people that you manage and ask for feedback. Now part of your requirement as the boss is to ask for feedback. Now you can show up and ask for feedback because you have to do it and you have to tick off that box. And your intention is I just have to get it done. Or you can show up and ask for feedback. Because you actually want to do better, you want to hear the feedback, you want to learn from people, and you want to improve how you show up as a boss. Now you can imagine those two groups of people are going to show up differently, if you're just trying to get it done. Your tone of voice, the way you show up, your mannerisms are going to be different than if you're trying to show up with the intent to actually listen and improve on who you are. And the people that you're asking are going to pick up on that because again, of mirror neurons, they're going to sense your tone, they're going to sense your mannerisms, and then they're going to respond based on what they see. And the same thing is true when you're having a difficult conversation with a significant other or with a family member.

Now you can show up to those difficult conversations with the intention of listening of understanding the other person's side of hearing their opinions of better understanding your own point of view. Or you can show up to those conversations with the intention of being heard and being right. You can imagine how those two groups of people show up differently. Okay, so how and when to use intentionality. You can essentially use intentionality, anytime. In fact, when I first learned about this about, you know, geez Louise, almost a decade ago, I started using that that and the power to manage my mind had been the two most important things that have transformed my life. intentionality is the reason why I can do so much in one day. In fact, I remember my sister five years ago asking me, how is it that you do so much, you know, at that time, I had two young kids under the age of five, I was the department chair, I was the wellness director for this larger organization. I was exercising every day, and I was excelling in this

fellowship program I was doing. She said, How do you do so much? And I thought she was, you know, kind of being facetious and asking some people ask that question. And when she was like, No, I'm serious, I really want to know my answer to her was, I just set the intention, I just set the intention that I'm going to do what I'm going to do, and I just go out and do it.

Okay, so how do you use it? So you can use it, and I'll share with you how I use it, then you can figure out where in your life does it make sense to use it, I use it before I go to bed every night. So when I'm about to lay down to go to bed at night, I set my intention for the next day, I look at everything I want to create for the next day, everything I want to accomplish, and then I set my intention, I say, okay, these are the things I'm going to get done. What's going to get in the way? And how am I going to approach that? Okay, what's going to get in the way, I'm going to feel a little bit tired, probably. And I'm going to remind myself that I'm committed to get this done. What's going to get in the way is what if it takes me too long to finish this task. Because my little perfectionist tendencies show up and it's causing me too long, I'm going to remind myself that this doesn't need to be perfect, it just needs to be complete. So those are some ways to do it the night before. Now I also use intentionality. Every morning, I wake up every morning, I do my gratitude statements.

And I set the intention of the kind of day I'm going to have today I'm gonna have a day where I'm fully present with my kids. And when I'm at work, I'm 100% productive. So I get a lot done and can leave work at work. I set the intention, when I'm going to go into my shift if I'm going into the ER, when I get to the ER before I get out of my car, I'll set my intention. Today I'm going to have a productive and efficient shift. And it's going to be calm, I'll say. So if I'm in the middle of a code and things get hectic, I'm going to stand firm, speak loudly and clearly so that everybody knows exactly what to do. And we can run that code smoothly. So you can set the intention anytime you want. Another time I set an intention is if I'm going into a lecture. Now a lot of us agree to listen to a workshop, a lecture, maybe this podcast, for example. And we sort of start glazing over a few minutes into whatever we're learning from or watching. And the reason why that is is because you know after a few minutes, we might get bored, and our brain is wanting to figure out what's next. So what I do is I tell myself, I'm going to go into this lecture and my intention is to learn three new things. And that keeps my brain focused into, into what I'm learning. And I'll tell myself if my brain starts to drift away. I will bring myself back to the lecture by reminding myself that I'm already here and the best way to get the most return on my investment is to stay present. So I shared with you when to use them and I kind of give you an inkling of how to do it. I think that the best way to do it is to set these if then statements. If this happens, then I will do this, I think that's a really great way to prime your brain. You can also do it simply by stating an intention.

When I listen, I'm going to listen for three, three things. When I watch, I'm going to watch for this, when I go in to have this conversation, I'm going to just make sure that I'm totally listening to their point of view, and I'm being open. But if then statements are also really helpful, let's say for example, you're trying to lose weight, and one of the things you're doing to try to lose weight is to not have an extra serving of dinner. So what you can say is, I'm not going to my intention is to not have an extra serving of dinner. If I finish my meal, and I'm still hungry, then I will have a large glass of water, take a few deep breaths, and I'll check in with myself to see if I still want to eat. Usually, that's enough and you won't want to eat but if you do still want to eat, then you can set an if then statement. If I'm still hungry, then I will choose to have carrots instead of an extra serving of dinner. So set those if then statements, they're incredibly

powerful. All right, so you can use it again, intentionality before you start your day at the beginning of your day, if you're gonna go onstage somewhere, so if you have a game or presentation, so for me, for example, I do a lot of public speaking, I lead a lot of corporate workshops and small group events.

And I always set the intention literally it doesn't take a long time, but two minutes before I'm going to go on I'll say my intention is to connect with the audience. And that Prime's my brain to show up authentically and vulnerably because I know if I'm trying to connect with the audience, the best way to connect is just just show up as myself. And that's really powerful. Okay, so let's summarize intentionality has been used for centuries outside of the United States and we've shown that it Prime's our brain to do what we're telling it to do. You can use it anytime throughout the day before you go to bed at night before you're going to have a difficult conversation. If you have to have a, if you're going to give a performance for example, if you're trying to create a goal and if then statements are incredibly powerful and helpful to use. Okay, my friends go and I mean you don't have to take my word for it by the way, go and try it for yourself. I promise you it's incredibly powerful. Okay, Hasta la proxima, Adios!

Vanessa 12:30

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